

**From:** [ANDERSON Jim M](#)  
**To:** [Burt Shephard/R10/USEPA/US@EPA](#); [Chip Humphrey/R10/USEPA/US@EPA](#)  
**Cc:** [Kristine Koch/R10/USEPA/US@EPA](#); [Sean Sheldrake/R10/USEPA/US@EPA](#)  
**Subject:** RE: feedback on potential interview questions  
**Date:** 08/08/2007 02:46 PM

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Chip,  
I'm OK with Burt's suggestions.

James M. Anderson  
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-----Original Message-----

From: Shephard.Burt@epamail.epa.gov  
[mailto:Shephard.Burt@epamail.epa.gov]  
Sent: Wednesday, August 08, 2007 1:59 PM  
To: Humphrey.Chip@epamail.epa.gov  
Cc: ANDERSON Jim M; Koch.Kristine@epamail.epa.gov;  
Sheldrake.Sean@epamail.epa.gov  
Subject: Re: feedback on potential interview questions

Chip,

Here's my 2 cents on the questions. I agree with Sean that we need to reduce the number of questions, specifically on cutting questions 7 and 8, I'd try to drop it to six or so questions. I think we can combine several of the other questions and reword them to eliminate some similarities and redundancies in the questions, and get down to 6-7 questions. Here's how I would do it.

- 1) What are your expectations for this job? What motivated you to apply for this job?
- 2) What are the critical components of the RPM job, and how much time would you spend on each?
- 3) Briefly describe your involvement and decision making roles at sites involving contaminated sediment investigations, risk assessment, remedial option selection and cleanup technology evaluation. (rewording of Chip's Q3)
- 4) As an RPM, how will you ensure that your level of oversight, technical recommendations, & decisions are consistent with other EPA RPMs & other regions? Flexibility & consistency may appear to be conflicting goals. Why is it important to be flexible? Why is it important to be consistent? Can you be both flexible & consistent? (A little wordy but I like the question)
- 5) Can you provide an example in your work where external stakeholders and EPA policy, technical interpretations and risk management utility of site data, or remedial decisions conflicted, and how you managed the conflict? (My attempt at combining Chip's questions 5, 9 and 10 into one question. All three are really trying to get at the same thing, which is how do you manage conflicts/differences of opinion between team members, stakeholders, PRPs and interested parties at a site)
- 6) What skills do you have that would make you an effective RPM on a complex sediment site(s)? Follow up - Give specific examples of how you have or would organize numerous demands such as submittals, deliverables, & meetings. How do you prioritize your work? The same skill set should be applicable to all hazardous substance sites, not just sediment sites. Prioritizing work should largely be covered by the second part of Q2, how much time he/she spends on each component of an RPM's job.
- 7) Is there anything else you'd like to tell us? Do you have any questions for us?

Chip, FYI, I'm on my way down to Corvallis in a few minutes as soon as I get Sean a few sentences on DDT benchmarks in sediment, probably won't have e-mail access. Can you leave me a voice mail message with the question you would like me to ask of the applicants? I'll try calling you and Deb tomorrow before the first interview to touch base.

Best regards,

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"If your experiment needs statistics to analyze the results, then you ought to have done a better experiment"

- Ernest Rutherford

Chip  
Humphrey/R10/USE  
PA/US

08/08/2007 11:54  
AM

To  
Kristine Koch/R10/USEPA/US@EPA,  
Sean Shelldrake/R10/USEPA/US@EPA,  
Burt Shephard/R10/USEPA/US@EPA,  
anderson.jim@deq.state.or.us

cc

Subject  
Re: feedback on potential  
interview questions

OK - here's a revised list based on feedback from Sean, Jim A and Burt.  
Might be a bit long with the follow-ups - welcome any suggestions for  
culling this down (there is some overlap) or changing the order. thanks

ch

Chip  
Humphrey/R10/USE  
PA/US

08/07/2007 01:13  
PM

To  
Kristine Koch/R10/USEPA/US@EPA,  
Sean Shelldrake/R10/USEPA/US@EPA,  
Burt Shephard/R10/USEPA/US@EPA,  
anderson.jim@deq.state.or.us

cc

Deb Yamamoto/R10/USEPA/US@EPA  
Subject  
feedback on potential interview  
questions

- 1) What are your expectations for this job? What motivated you to apply for this job?
- 2) What are the critical components of the RPM job?
- 3) Briefly describe your sediment site investigation, risk assessment, cleanup technology evaluation and cleanup work experience. What was your involvement and what types of decisions & recommendations did you make?
- 4) As an RPM, how will you ensure that your level of oversight, technical recommendations, & decisions are consistent with other EPA RPMs & other regions? Flexibility & consistency may appear to be conflicting goals. Why is it important to be flexible? Why is it important to be consistent? Can you be both flexible & consistent?
- 5) How would you resolve differences of technical opinions/recommendations among your project team? Give specific examples of successes &/or lessons learned from your work experience.
- 6) What skills do you have that would make you an effective RPM on a complex sediment site(s)? Follow up - Give specific examples of how you have or would organize numerous demands such as submittals, deliverables, & meetings. How do you prioritize your work?
- 7) Describe your project management approach to a new NPL site.
- 8) Describe a conceptual model(s) for a simple and a complex contaminated sediment site, and how to approach risk management of various contaminant pathways.
- 9) What is your view on balancing the interests of multiple stakeholders, internal and external, and EPA's role in making site investigation and cleanup decisions? Hypothetical follow-up - You are writing a proposed plan and are trying to decide between several potential cleanup levels; one is vociferously favored by the Tribes and communities, which is lower. The PRP will likely litigate the cleanup if EPA picks the lower number, favored by the Tribes & communities. Literature and millions of dollars of site specific scientific data are split between the lower and higher cleanup values, the lower of which will cost the PRP 10-20% more to pursue cleanup. Should EPA pursue an approach the PRP will agree to, though it may not in the end constitute a final remedy? What if the State supports the higher number? the lower number?
- 10) Describe a difficult situation you have had to face in your current

job and how you tackled it.

Wrap Up: Is there anything else you'd like to tell us? Do you have any questions for us?